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Little Red Herrings-Freedom, Freedom, Freeee-dom

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frontlist version. At **Mpublishing** (U. Michigan) simultaneous “p” and “e” publishing didn’t result in a drop in sales, although it’s worth pointing out that the OA books were not downloadable. Their Open Humanities Press imprint has attracted scholars who believe in OA. Print revenues have not been affected. More collaboration with peer publishers, authors, and libraries is needed. All speakers agreed that more experimentation, more analysis, and more standards are necessary for OA monograph publishing to succeed, as well as good marketing and discoverability. It was very encouraging to hear that OA can co-exist with ongoing revenue streams and be financially sustainable. However, seed money is a key stimulus to providing the ability to experiment with OA business models.

Positive Feedback: Using Interlibrary Loan Data to Enhance Collections and Collection Development Practices — Presented by **Forrest Link** (The College of New Jersey); **Teresa Negrucci** (Brown University)

Reported by: **Kyle McCarrell** (Augusta State University)
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Interlibrary Loan. A valuable resource that can eat up a large chunk of a library’s budget. But can libraries save costs by enhancing their collection in high-use ILL areas to negate some ILL transactions? This was the focus of a session by **Link** and **Negrucci**, who looked at ILL transactions at their respective institutions in hopes of informing their collection development practices. At **The College of New Jersey**, researchers looked at ILL data from 2007-2011, comparing it to what was purchased during that same time frame. After noting trends, it became clear that a wholesale move to purchasing ILL requests was not wise, particularly for purchasing the large amount of titles related to knitting. However, more collaboration between ILL and Acquisitions would benefit the institution financially. At **Brown University**, librarians looked at faculty ILL requests to identify collection gaps and to identify departments with a high number of ILL requests. After analyzing the five-year sample, the findings showed gaps in the humanities, foreign language, and **Oxford University Press** titles. To address the problem, data-informed, not data-driven, adjustments were made to the approval plan to include different publishers and the purchase of new eBook collections.

Textbooks, Libraries & Students: An Evolving Partnership — Presented by **Susan Kendall** (San Jose State University); **Mary Nino** (San Jose State University); **Rae Ann Stahl** (San Jose State University)

Reported by: **Anne K. Abate** (Library Discount Network)
<anne@librarydiscountnetwork.com>

In order to set the stage, the speakers provided an explanation of the **California State University System** and the demographics at **San Jose State University (SJSU)**. Textbook prices have increased sharply in the last twenty years, so much so that many students are no longer buying their textbooks. The solution to this in the **California State University System** was a system called “Affordable Learning Solutions” to help students transition to e-textbooks. **SJSU** created a page on the library Website listed textbooks available as eBooks from the library. They identified the eBooks in their collection that are being used as textbooks and post a list of these for the students. The process was extremely time-intensive but has led to cost savings for the students. It would be difficult to replicate the process based on the information presented since very few details were provided.

Wasted Words? Current Trends in CD Policies — Presented by **Maureen James** (University of Arkansas at Little Rock); **Audrey Powers** (University of South Florida); **Donna Rose** (University of Arkansas at Little Rock); **Megan Sheffield** (University of South Florida); **Matt Torrence** (University of South Florida)

Reported by: **Victoria Koger** (Eastern Kentucky University)
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This session was really two sessions in one time slot. First, **Powers**, **Sheffield**, and **Torrence** presented data on a survey of **ARL** libraries’ collection development policies (CDP). They found CDP are not used to guide purchases and it was difficult to track many of the policies down. Sometimes only part of a CDP was online, if at all. In conclusion, the presenters and the audience agreed that libraries need a collection development philosophy instead of the traditional policy and want to keep it short to give librarians the power to make holistic decisions.

James and **Rose** described the process they are going through in rewriting Collection Development Guidelines. They appointed a group, gathered information from their own institution and others, and have written several sections. **James** and **Rose** want their new CD guidelines to be available online, kept up-to-date, and definitely not as detailed as the 1997 version. From audience questions we learned there will be training for selectors as they begin to write subject area guidelines from a template. There was also a discussion surrounding what to call multimedia and whether it should just be addressed in the policy/guidelines overview or to avoid division between formats. 🌳

*That’s all the reports we have room for in this issue. Watch for more reports from the 2012 Charleston Conference in upcoming issues of **Against the Grain**. Presentation material (PowerPoint slides, handouts) and taped session links from many of the 2012 sessions are available online. Visit the **Conference Website** at www.katina.info/conference. — KS*

Little Red Herrings — Freedom, Freedom, Freeee-dom

by **Mark Y. Herring** (Dean of Library Services, Dacus Library, Winthrop University) <herringm@winthrop.edu>

Remember **Richie Havens** and his “Freedom” song at Woodstock? Okay, neither do I but you can see it on YouTube. It brings to mind another kind of freedom in our profession. Almost everywhere you turn today you’ll see this expression or its facsimile, whether you’re reading a professional journal, a blog, or even a newspaper: “Information wants to be free.” The idea behind this sentiment is that all information, whoever creates it, is yours, mine, and ours. In fact, the only

person it may not really belong to is the creator, the originator. Think of it as anti-copyright sloganeering run amok.

And this phrase brings to mind a line from Plato: “Everything that deceives may be said to enchant.” Now don’t get me wrong. I’m no fan of the current copyright laws. They are draconian in this country, and I am the possessor of several. But simply because something is draconian doesn’t mean its solution is to go to the antipodean extreme.

At least a sizable portion of the information-wants-to-be-free mantra grew out of the tragedy surrounding **Aaron Swartz**. **Swartz**, readers will recall, took on, of all things, **JSTOR** and began downloading thousands of its articles and distributing them for free. He was, like many technology gurus, a college dropout, but brilliant, and could make computers do things others could not even understand. Some observers blame his subse-

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quent suicide on prosecutors, but that's only because they are desperate to find meaning in the loss of so promising a life. **Swartz** took his own life; no one else took it for him. Like all tragedies, however, suicide makes little sense, but blaming others for it helps nothing and answers nothing.

Julian Assange, too, has helped along this information-wants-to-be-free campaign. **Assange's** wikileaks drama may or may not be over. But his data dumping of all sorts of once confidential (and truly boring) records really did little to advance the argument one way or the other. His own personal peccadillos have further served to obfuscate what's really at stake here.

Finally, in a case that is mostly different but springs perhaps from the same motivation, is **Edward Snowden**. **Snowden** leaked news about the British and American governments' mass surveillance efforts on their respective citizens. (It's too delicious an irony to point out that this occurred during the **Obama** openness-and-transparency administration.) **Snowden's** recent flights to China, to Russia, and possibly to Ecuador, not exactly the lands of the free, further complicate a complicated case.

Information wants to be free, so **Snowden** made it freely available to all. **Snowden** is a hero to some, a traitor to others. Probably what surprised more than anything is not that these governments did this, but that so many people were surprised that they did. In an age in which madmen fly planes into buildings, strap bombs to young children, arm women with AK-47s, and prey upon a country's unrestricted freedoms, one can imagine the outcry would have been much worse were we cleaning up hundreds of bodies because no one was minding the communications of those with ill intent. Then again, if men were angels, we wouldn't need government. But let's leave that aside for now.

None of these cases are poster children for the information-wants-to-be-free mantra. If anything, they provide a good reason for reexamining the argument.

Does information want to be free, and if it is, what does that mean for libraries? In answer to the first question, I cannot imagine a case in which



all information is free, or even most of it. **Chris Anderson** (he of "free" fame — a book he let go for free after he offered it for sale) believes everything can be free, as in everything from air travel to surgery. But where will be the incentives for discovery, and where the opportunities for risk-taking that comes from research and development that allows for those opportunities? Are we all going to work for **Google** and **Amazon**, and will our futures be determined by some ad woman in New York who determines what gets sold by banner ads?

Having said all that, what are we going to do about changing copyright since that is the bailiwick of Congress? Sure, we can all begin by violating copyright, but is that really what we want: information at noon in the OK corral? Making everything free sounds good in theory. It's the practice of it that makes it so costly in the end. I hate to be a stickler for the Constitution, but nothing in it demands that we make available everyone's ideas for everyone else to use as they wish. Our rush to make everything free may well push us headlong into a free-for-all.

In answer to the second question, what does it mean for libraries, I'm afraid we haven't given this as much thought as it deserves. If I can gain access to every form and/or kind of information for free, what do I really need a library, or a librarian, for? Oh, I know, many will rush forward to argue that we'll need them more than ever to help sort out all this, but honestly, isn't this what's happening now? And is there any evidence that points to any sort of growing trend in our direction? Sure, it's a value-added service we provide. But in this financial climate do we expect something that will appear as superfluous and as costly as a library to be on anyone's list when everything you want will already be free?

We cannot leave the current state of affairs in the mess we have them in now. Our cost model is, as everyone knows, unsustainable. But I don't think "information wants to be free" is the solution to our problems. I think it will merely add yet another layer of difficulties, and one that may well prove librarianship's l'assommoir.

Because sometimes, I feel like the library is almost gone, as **Richie Havens** might have put it. And the "information wants to be free" crowd may well push us there sooner rather than later. 🌿

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It's no secret that I am not a **social media type**. I really am an introvert, especially in my older age. However, I am thinking of joining **Twitter** based on the wonderful "Luminaries" column from the bam-zowie **Rachel Fleming**. **Todd Carpenter**, especially, made me feel okay that I can't read it all. Let's **Twitter** away.

Encountered **Doug Roesemann** on Linked In just to prove I sometimes do social me-

dia. **Doug** is adjunct faculty at **Texas State University** but I remember him best when he was at **ReferenceUSA**. Hope to see him in **Charleston** soon!

We are having another **Hyde Park Corner debate** in **Charleston** this year at the end of the **Charleston Conference**. This one will be between the awe-inspiring **Rick Anderson** and the very scholarly **Jean-Claude Guedon** whose wife is also a librarian and will be attending the **Conference** as well. Stay tuned for another exciting discussion!

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